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Sunshine Dreams

BY

CATHERINE B. DILLON

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Catherine B. Dillon

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Dedication

TO YOU,

Dear, brown-eyed, "little sister of my youth," who loved without questioning, questioned without reasoning and lived in a happy land of Make-believe. Let us, you and I, go back year by year, into that land of sunshine, roses and love, and find relief for our ingrowing dreams. How happy we were! But we have discarded our rose-colored glasses and life has been revealed to us thru' a deluge of tears and lies. Even your eyes are losing their lustre and laughter. But remember, the beautiful things of nature we once loved are still extant, and life still holds out precious gifts!

THE AUTHOR.

Oct. 8th, 1920.

Author's Note

I do not expect this booklet to meet the approval of the hypo-critical, or the admiration of those who weigh literary work according to its value educationally or commercially, but from those whom I call my friends and those who encourage the embryo poet, when they find such, I hope to receive my rewards.

I am not presuming to thrust these writings upon the public as the work of a full-fledged poet. They are the joyous day dreams, the sympathetic thoughts, and the deep reflections of a very little girl, a high school girl, and a still young woman. So, I beg my readers to consider the youthfulness of the writer, and not judge too harshly.

To the public these may be only the work of an obscure, unrecognized poet, but to me they are the record of the happiest moments of a life. They are, indeed, my "Sunshine Dreams!"

C. B. D.

A Faded Rose

Down in a chest of keepsakes,
Where War souvenirs repose,
I came across a faded flower—
A pressed Killarney rose.
How it brought back memories!
The scene changed, so it seemed,
And soon I was in Washington,
Awakening from a dream.
My best friend was leaning o'er me,
"Look at what I have!" she said.
And, she laid a bunch of roses—
White Killarneys—on my bed.

"Aren't they lovely?
When did they come?
I can't imagine whom
They are from!"
Bew's big eyes twinkled,
"Just think! They were sent
By Mrs. Wilson—and
Our own dear President!"

"Roses from Woody!
Don't joke with me Bew,
You know I'm terribly sick
With this Flu!"
"That's why they sent these—
They heard you were sick.
Now you'll get well,
I'm sure, pretty quick!"

The President's roses
Worked like a charm.
Soon, old Doc reported,
"No cause for alarm!"
Roses! Killarneys!
The flower I love best!
But roses from Wilson
Surpass all the rest!

I laid my precious token
Away with gentle care—
The one pressed from a dozen,
That were decked with maiden hair.
I need nothing to remind me
Of anyone so grand,
But, I'll always keep this faded rose
From the World's Greatest Man!

October 20, 1920.

In Potter's Field

(With apologies to the late Joyce Kilmer.)
In Potter's Field,
No poppies grow,
Nor are there crosses,
Row on row,
In Potter's Field.

But, human hearts
Lie buried low,
And God will find them
There, I know
In Potter's Field.

O'er rugged, unkempt graves entwine
Trailing, rambling, blossoming vines—
The purple Passion flowers shield
The lowly souls in Potter's Field.

When Gabriel's trumpet loudly blows,
And 'round the world
Its summons goes,
E'en in that dismal burial ground,
The wretched ones will hear its sound;
And they will be the first to kneel—
For God loves those in Potter's Field!

October 8, 1920.

It Is a Sin?

Is it a sin to long for one
Whose soul is not yours to have?
Is it a crime to love and worship him
Like a slave?
If your conscience is free from harming
Those that are near and dear,
Free from emotions alarming,
And he does not know
You are near?

Is it a sin to watch him,
And to wish that you were his?
Is it wrongful to long for his kiss?
When you know that such could never be,
And he does not know
You are living?
Is the thinking and wishing
Really as bad as the giving?

Somehow, Oh world!
I think not!
For we can not controll our love,
It is Heaven born and remains with us
Till we reach our home above.
We can only guide our straying feet,
Into the narrow way,
But, the love goes along with us,
For real love comes to stay.

It can't be a sin to want him,
E'en tho' he'll ne'er be mine,
I can not help from thinking
That this silent love is divine,
And I know a just God will forgive me,
When I wish that his children were mine!
It's like playing a game of make-believe,
A game I can never win!
Dangerous for most, I understand,
But for me—is it a sin?

July, 1920.

Just a Negro's Shack

Up along the Mississippi,
Just below the Parish line,
There's a tiny weather beaten house,
And up its shaky gallery,
Twines a sweetly scented vine.
A negro mammy smokes her pipe—
Her "wash" all on the line.
Sly old pussy on the steps,
Watches for a mouse.
Everything seems cheerful
About this tiny house!

Just behind the kitchen,
There's a peach tree in the yard—
A peachy, pink tree, all in bloom,
A sight to thrill a bard!
I know there're things far lovelier
For one to write about,
But, somehow the picture keeps coming up,
And I can't drive out the thought
Of that old ramshackle negro's hut,
With that peach tree in the yard!

April 6, 1920.

Salvia

Each morn I pass
A bed of Salvia,
Growing in a crimson mass,
In the park.
It thrills my brain,
Stirs my heart.
E'en more than the refrain
Of the lark

A flame, a fire,
A blaze of crimson red,
It fills one with desire
For nobler things.
The faces of friends
Are in its glow,
And the message it sends
On Nature's wings.

Oh, Salvia, scarlet flower!
You are like a flaming soul,
Striving on to the hour,
When it shall reach its goal!

City Park, Dec. 10th, 1919.

Uncle Sam's Girls

Della B. Abbott----War Risk Insurance.

A beautiful blue eyed blonde is she—
That golden hair and blush are all her own—
Radiant, yet sturdy, as a rose in the open grown!
There's nothing false about her—
She's the real U. S. aristocrat,
My Della from Nebraska!

Agnes Preston----U. S. Food Administration.

As fair as the jasmine,
That grows in her South,
And sheds forth its fragrance at night,
With her azure blue eyes,
Her red rosebud mouth,
Her dark curly hair and complexion so white!
And music has so filled her soul
That there's no place there for hate!
She was born in Alabama,
The dreamy cotton state!

Bew Patten----U. S. Surgeon General's.

Here's a girl that one must take to
With open arms and heart!
She's both serious and cheerful,
And has mastered many an art.
She's the kind that's right there with it
When you're in for any sport.
The best old friend that ever was—
The Emersonian sort.
She isn't posing as a beauty,
But her looks are as fine
As her sense of duty
When there's work to be done
She'll never "balk"—
This fine strong girl
Of old New York.

Lucy Duley----War Risk Insurance.
"She dwelled amid the untrodden ways—"
Or so the poet sings his lays,
But little Lucy's from a place,
Where many splendid horses race.
Lucy, faithful, kind and true!
Often times, I think of you!
Dwelling among traditions grand,
In the noble state of Maryland!

Helen Dolly Van Achere----War Risk Insurance.
A War Bride, but not a Helen of Troy;
Hesitating and sometimes coy—
The kind that forgets her friends in a day
Was the girl I knew from "I-o-way"!

Ethel Etheridge Clayton----War Risk Insurance.
Demure and gentle little friend!
First of all—true to the end!
Loved by all she knew—
And those were not a few.
Yet, she was a little slow—
Hailed from Mississip', you know!

Nannie Florence----War Risk Insurance.
Sweet and hospitable
As her own native state!
(Some man has missed
A worthy helpmate!)
One couldn't help but love her,
For there's naught but goodness in her!
She's just like all the other "folks"
That come from "Ole Virginia"!

Rose Allen----War Risk Insurance.

From the place that gives the finest
To the Union and the world,
Came this Allen of "The Allens"—
This slim, dark, Southern girl.
I don't need to write much about her,
For no compliment could be finer
Than to tell you that she came from
Good old North Carolina!

Each state was represented
In the war worker's crowd,
And each of Uncle Sammy's girls
Were enough to make him proud.
From East to West,
From North to South,
They came to do their best
To make us win the frightful war,
And put the world at rest!

There were many I did not write about—
Michigan, Texas, Indiana,
California, North Dakota,
(I, myself, from Lou'siana),
Vermont, Washington and Georgia
Had their daughters at D. C.,
Each one was Pro-American
And mighty good to see—
For the American girl
Is the best in the world,
No matter which her state may be!

New Orleans, La., Sept. 1919.

One Silver Chevron

Somewhere in North Carolina,
Where the morning glories grow,
There's a dear old pal o' mine—
A soldier chum, you know.
Sometimes, I wish that he were here,
To hear his voice once more,
And see his beaming eyes of blue,
As in good old days of yore.

They say that War's a terrible thing,
With all its death and loss,
But, Gee! Look at the friends it brings—
The "folks" you run across!
That kid I knew at old Camp Meigs,
Was such a dandy boy,
I know he makes his friends back home
Just laugh and cry with joy.

And, if you heard that Rebel talk,
You'd be so darned amused —
He mixes "V's" and "W's" so,
You can't tell which he's used.
You can mimic any dialect,
From the British Isles to China,
But, the only ones can get that twist
Are born in North Ca'lina.

Say, that boy was a brick all right,
A Rebel thru' and thru'!
I know he'd have put up "some fight,
And captured Heinies too.
(You see what Uncle Sammy lost
'Cause this lad didn't get across!)

Some day, when all things look well,
I'm going to North Ca'lin'
And won't we make things hum a spell,
In that dull, quiet clime!
For I can't forget that pal o'mine
'Neath North Ca'lina's skies,
For he had those morning glories,
Deep down in his blue eyes!

Houston, Tex., June, 1919.

My Dixieland

Oh, take me to my Southland,
Where the towering pine trees grow,
Where the sun is ever shining
And there's no such thing as snow,
Take me to my Southland
Where a soft cool zephyr blows
And wafts the scent of orange
With the perfume of the rose!

Let me see the rows of cotton,
Standing stately once again,
Take me to the old plantation,
Where they raise the sugar cane.
Let me see the mines of sulphur,
And the chrystal salt mines too,
And all the fruit and nut trees—
For, indeed there's not a few.

Let me see the Mississippi,
In her quiet ebb and flow,
As she winds her serpent pathway
To the Gulf of Mexico.
Won't you let the band play "Dixie"
Or, some other sweet refrain
For there's nothing like a Southern tune
To ease away a pain?

The mocking birds are singing,
Down in Lover's Lane,
And the wild ducks are a-flying
From the Shores of Pontchartrain.
No one knows how much it means
To be far from dear New Orleans,
The land of Joyous dreams.

Oh, I long to be in Dixie,
'Neath Louisiana's skies,
Where hearts are worth the waiting for,
And love's the greatest prize.
Friends, with arms extended,
Await my coming there,
And Mother sits a-rocking
In a great big wicker chair.

Tho' it's not so far off, as it seems
A space of many hundred miles
Divides me from my dreams,
But I'm going back,
When I get well, and have the ready fare,
And, "believe me," war nor Uncle Sam,
Won't pull me out of there.

So, take me to my Southland,
Where they raise the pearly rice,
And all "the kids" and little things,
Treat one Awful nice,
To the land of a la Creole,
And gumbo filet fine,
And—"yum-yum"!—good coffee,
That's most as strong as wine!
Oh, you can have your Washington,
With all its splendor grand,
But give me back my Southern town,
In good Old Dixieland!

Washington, D. C., Oct. 10, 1918.

My Little Bit of Heaven

Have you ever had a boy of yours you loved so very dear,
Have you ever longed and longed for him and wished
that he was near?
Have you ever prayed and prayed for nights that God would
keep him well,
When you knew that he was face to face with death 'mid
shot and shell?

Chorus:—

Sure a little bit of heaven fell from out the sky one day,
Just a tiny baby boy, with big soft eyes of grey,
And when the angels left it here, it filled us with delight,,
With his cooing baby laughter and his dimpled smiles so
bright.
Then we cuddled him and cared for him, and watched him
grow so grand,
No other was just like him in all the wide, wide land.
He grew up to be a soldier, and to fight for Uncle Sam,
And he's somewhere in the trenches in that place called
No Man's Land.

Washington, D. C., Sept. 24, 1918.

Belgian Babies

Last night while all was quiet,
And I lay fast asleep,
There came to me a vision—
A sight that made me weep.
I saw a little Belgian boy,
With handless arms extended,
His baby eyes were filled with tears,
For his childhood joys were ended.
His sobbing voice was calling—
I know he called to me,
So, now I'm going to volunteer
To help across the sea.

Chorus.

I hear the Belgian babies calling me,
And soon I will be sailing o'er the sea.
With the Red Cross over there
I'm going to do my share,
To help to win the War of Liberty!
And if God will spare my life
To come back from the strife,
I'll bring a Belgian baby back with me!

Can Belgium heal her wounds,
When the world's at peace?
Can she dry her babies' tears,
Make their sorrow cease?
Perhaps—but, handless baby boys
Will dwell still in the land,
And each small, handless, baby boy
Will grow up to be a man,
Whose voice will be heard
Calling for vengeance on the Hun.
So let us stand behind the flag
And make this War be won!

July, 1918.

Whistling Billy

He gave up all his future—
His fame as a great star—
To serve his loved Old Glory,
In this time of strife and war.
How sad! That Death should claim him,
E'en before he had his chance,
Over There, to cast his lot
With our dear brave boys in France!

No more shall Billy's whistling
Be heard in this fair land!
(He was a carefree whistler,
When he led old Tulane's band!)
Yet, still the memory 'll linger,
For time can ne'er efface
The mental picture of this lad,
With his rosy happy face!

Our Billy was that kind of youth
Well-named the "eternal boy":
A friend staunch and true hearted—
A mother's greatest joy!
God never meant dear Billy
To be an aged man,
And he was too young, too blithesome,
To be sent to No Man's Land!

A boy he was, and such remains,
For God called his soul above,
Where in peace among the angels,
He can cherish all our Love!

June, 1918.

(To the memory of Billy Sherwood, movie actor and soldier, who died at Walter Reid Hospital, Washington, D. C., June, 1918).

The Orphan Over the Way

She stood 'neath a tree in the courtyard—
Not a picturesque one, I must say—
But the scene was quite in keeping
With the orphan over the way.

As I saw her in an old plaid shawl,
And a gingham dress of grey,
I felt a pang of pity
For the orphan over the way.

She stood there, sadly, motionless—
Her young heart far from gay—
Ah! Death had shattered the youth and hopes
Off this orphan over the way!

But, take her from those bleak brick walls,
Into the sun-kissed day,
And, then you'll win a dimpled smile
From the orphan over the way!

Give her some sunshine, roses and love;
Give her some hours of play;
Let joy in thru' the windows of life
For this orphan over the way.

And in the stillness of the night
When she upward looks to pray,
Your name will be sent to Heaven
By the orphan over the way!

(N. O. La., January, 1916)

The Pink Killarney Rose

Of all the beautiful flowers,
Within the garden wall,
The pink rose of Killarney
Seemeth the best of all.
I love it not for its beauty—
Tho' 'tis exquisite, I think;
Nor its fragrant perfume,
Nor its lovely, delicate pink!

I know a fair, young maiden,
Whose eyes are an azure blue;
She's the dearest friend I have;
And my love for her is true.
Her complexion is the color
That the satin petals disclose—
So, because it reminds me of her,
I love the Killarney Rose!

She is kind and loving to me,
As one would be to a child;
She is sweet like the Killarney;
She is charming; she is mild.
Therefore: Of all the flowers,
Within the garden wall,
The pink rose of Killarney
Seemeth the best of all!

April 10, 1913.

A Card of Thanks

Ah! Eros with thy arrow,
And thy penetrating darts,
Thou has awakened the most dormant of hearts!
A heart that knew not
What love did really mean;
A heart wherein indifference and coldness
Reigned supreme!
It knew naught of wordly joys—
It seemed barred from these,
By massive walls and iron gates.
It sought not for the path
To the place where glory waits!

Now, since thy arrow
Has pierced this sad heart,
All coldness has vanished;
Indifference will soon depart;
Earthly things seem to be dressed in
A garb fit for things above.
Ah! How radiant everything is,
In the glorious eyes of love!

But, Eros, your arrow has taken
A strange and different course.
It's usual one has been forsaken,
But the change is for better not worse.
For what cared this heart for the follies
Off ridiculous "puppy love?"
It longed for that glorious friendship,
Which seems made in the heavens above!

So, Eros, I heartily thank you
For what you have done for me;
I hope my queer heart shall profit,
By the work of a bow,
An arrow——and thee!

May, 1912.

When Shall We Three Meet Again?

(On seeing the picture with this title—Nov. 28, 1911).

When shall we three meet again?
This question my heart asks with pain.
When shall I meet that girl so sweet,
And the little god, whose work was in vain?
When shall we three meet again?

Oft' times, I sit and ponder
O'er things that have long since past,
And in my dreams, I wander,
Down the lane where I saw her last.
Ah, Cupid, you did your best
To help me her love to gain,
But you failed, as did the rest,
And we may ne'er meet again!

I see her now in a picture—
That dear, sweet girl I love!
Her smile fills my heart with rapture!
She's an angel from above!
The face on the picture seems to say,
"Be patient! Your love will return!
Tho' 'twas only the other day,
She your affections did spurn!"

I feel that she loves me still,
As she did in days gone by;
I know we shall meet again—
Cupid, my girl, and I.
But, that question my heart asks with pain—
Asks me again and again!
Yes, I know I shall meet
That girl so sweet—
But, when shall we three meet again?

November 28, 1911.

Thanksgiving Day

One autumn day,
A long, long time ago,
Our Pilgrim Fathers determined
Their thankfulness to show
To God, Who does things great and small;
Who makes the sun shine,
The cool rain fall;
The flowers bloom;
The rivers flow;
The rich fruit ripen;
And the fresh winds blow.

For several days,
The Lord they praised,
And feasted off
The things they'd raised.
Then, when all was o'er,
They went back to their work;
That work from which the Pilgrims
Were never known to shirk.
Their farms, they daily raked and hoed!
Some also worked for others.
They worked to pay the debts they owed,
For these were honest debtors.

Tho' now, our country
Has changed in many a way,
We ne'er forget to celebrate
The Pilgrim's Thanksgiving Day.

November 14th, 1910.

Just Life

We have come to the end of life's winding lane,
And find there a shady glen
Under a moss covered oak tree,
Lies a little girl of ten.

A smile flickers over her dimpled cheeks
The smile of peaceful sleep
While, from behind the tree trunks around her,
Numberless fairies peep.

Soon, they steal out to gaze upon
The little one on the grass.
"Let us all wish something," Queen Mad said,
"For this little brown-eyed lass!
Now, I'll wave my wand about her head
And make our wishes come to pass."

Up stepped the fairy Good Fortune,
"I'll give her wealth!" she said.
"And I'll make her lose it!" Black Magic sneered,
With a haughty toss of her head."

"You need'nt think you'll harm the child,
I'll give her strength to bear
Misfortune and pain.
She'll live down all suffering
Under my watchful care."
Strength laughed at the hateful Black Magic
As she flew off thru' the air.

Then, Genius kissed the ruby lips,
And whispered, "My little friend,
I'll give you the kind of gift
That makes a life have no end.
Down thru' the ages your work will go,
And tho' you may never know it
Some day the world will think of you,
As a worthy noble poet."

Beauty smiled on the sleeping child
"God has given you your looks,
So I can't change your face,
But I'll give you a gentle manner,
And you'll walk with a stately grace."
Health breathed upon the small white form,
But, Disease slipped in a germ,
"I'll not do you very much harm," said she,
"But, you'll be ill for a term."

Queen Mab stepped forward and waved her wand,
"You'll have to watch over her long,
And see that her joys will be profound,
And even her ills not all wrong."

So the fairies left her, and the little girl lay,
Silently, on the grass.
You and I turned back on our way
Over that road to the Past.
Things have been joyful,
Yet, sometimes, we've been sad,
Haven't we little friend?
But, somehow let's say
The world's not so bad,
Before we come to our end!

Oct. 13th, 1920.

(THE END.)

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